Works make for the cleansing of the heart; but not for the attaining of the Real; the gaining of the Real comes through discernment—not even by myriads of works is it gained. —*The Crest Jewel of Wisdom*

THEOSOPHY

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GENETIC YEARS

A READING of the early pages of *A Modern Panarion*—a collection of H.P.B.'s articles put into book form in 1895—soon makes evident why her presence, wherever she went, attracted attention. Incisive clarity is joined with surging intellectual strength in everything she said. And in these first contributions—which were often letters to editors—she showed from the beginning that she had detailed knowledge concerning matters of which the world of Western learning and scholarship knew practically nothing. About half the material contained in this volume is made up of letters and articles which had appeared in Spiritualist journals or some other non-Theosophical publication, the rest being articles reprinted from the *Theosophist*. In both portions of the book the vigor of the writing is the same, but the focus changes as H.P.B. addresses the specifically Theosophical audience her efforts had called into being.

Indeed, it could be said that H.P.B. spoke with two voices, or even three, if we add to the exposition of the metaphysics and doctrines of the Wisdom Religion her rendition of the cipher of ancient books of devotion.

At the outset, she spoke to the general public, usually in defense of some unjustly attacked medium or to deflate the pretentious claims of some would-be scientific critic of Spiritualism. For a time, H.P.B. seemed to identify herself with the Spiritualists, but even while defending some of their claims she pointed to the weaknesses of Spiritualism, both philosophically and as a movement. Nearly a year before the founding of the Theosophical Society in

New York, she said in a letter to the *Spiritual Scientist*:

> . . . I am obliged to confess that I really do not believe that I have done any good—at least any practical good—to Spiritualism itself; and I never hope to perform such a feat as that were I to keep on for an eternity bombarding all the newspapers of America with my challenges and refutations of the lies told by the so-called "scientific exposures."
>
> It is with a profound sadness in my heart that I acknowledge this fact, for I begin to think there is no help for it. For over fifteen years I have fought my battle for the blessed truth; I have travelled and preached it—though I never was born for a lecturer—from the snow-covered tops of the Caucasian Mountains, as well as from the sandy valleys of the Nile. I have proved the truth of it practically and by persuasion. For the sake of Spiritualism I have left my home, an easy life among a civilized society, and have become a wanderer upon the face of this earth. I had already seen my hopes realized, beyond the most sanguinary expectations, when, in my restless desire for more knowledge, my unlucky star brought me to America.
>
> Knowing this country to be the cradle of modern Spiritualism, I came over here from France with feelings not unlike those of a Mohammedan approaching the birthplace of his prophet. I had forgotten that "no prophet is without honour save in his own country." In the less than fourteen months that I am here, sad experience has but too well sustained the never-dying evidence of this immortal truth.

The Spiritualists, she had found, were too wedded to "respectability" to risk a full apostasy from Christian belief. They would not stand up for their convictions and left their unorthodox defender, H.P.B., virtually without allies. H.P.B. was willing to be known as a Spiritualist, if, as she remarked, belief in the immortality of the human spirit made one a Spiritualist. In a letter to the Cornell scholar, Hiram Corson, written some two months after the *Spiritual Scientist* letter appeared, she revealed to him: "I am here in this country sent by my Lodge on behalf of modern spiritualism, and it is my most sacred duty to unveil what is, and expose what is not." Perhaps, she added, it was a hundred years too soon for her work to have the desired effect! In this letter, written nine months before the founding of the Society, she said that she was a "spiritualist" by reason of knowledge of the same "theosophy" that was known to Raymond Lully, Picus della Mirandola, Cornelius Agrippa, Robert Fludd, and others.

Many years later, in 1890, in her *Lucifer* article "The Cycle Moveth," she put into perspective the Spiritualist movement, and

also the reason for her initial relations with it, by speaking of the great awakening it heralded, rousing the mankind of the age from "its long cataleptic sleep." Although the confusions and misconceptions attending the awakening were many, there was this to be said:

> Yet in truth, its phænomena, its psychic and mesmeric manifestations, were but the cyclic pioneers of the revival of prehistoric Theosophy, and the occult Gnosticism of the antediluvian mysteries. These are facts no intelligent Spiritualist will deny; as, in truth, modern Spiritualism is but an earlier revival of crude Theosophy, and modern Theosophy a *renaissance* of ancient Spiritualism.

Having drawn the fire of materialists who found the phenomena of the Spiritualists unbelievable and fraudulent, H.P.B. at once began to earn the antagonism of the Spiritualists, who regarded her teachings concerning magic and adept-powers as a threat to their own beliefs. At the time of her friendship with Prof. Corson, the editor of a Spiritualist journal published his opinion that there was not and never had been a science of magic. He blamed the idea of "magic" on "humbugging spirits," apparently supposing H.P.B. to have been deceived by them. In her potent reply, H.P.B. began by remarking the greater likelihood that the editor, Colby, had been humbugged, since one of his "spirit" informants had placed the Apennines in Spain! Finding his denial of magic ridiculous, she exclaimed:

> Why, man alive, did you never open a book in your life besides your own records of Tom, Dick and Harry descending from upper spheres to remind their Uncle Sam that he had torn his gaiters or broken his pipe in the far West?
>
> Do you suppose that magic is confined to witches riding astride broomsticks and then turning themselves into black cats? Even the latter superstitious trash, though it was never called Magic but Sorcery, does not appear so great an absurdity for one to accept who firmly believes in the transfiguration of Mrs. Compton into Katie Brinks. The laws of nature are unchangeable. The conditions under which a medium can be transformed, entirely absorbed in the process by a spirit, into the semblance of another person, will hold good whenever that spirit, or rather *force,* should have the fancy to take the form of a cat.
>
> The exercise of magical power is the exercise of powers *natural,* but superior to the ordinary functions of nature. A miracle is not a violation of the laws of Nature, except for ignorant people. Magic is but a *science,* a profound knowledge of the Occult forces in Nature, and of the laws governing the visible

> or the invisible world. Spiritualism in the hands of an Adept becomes Magic, for he is learned in the art of blending together the laws of the universe, without breaking any of them and thereby violating Nature. In the hands of an experienced medium, Spiritualism becomes unconscious sorcery; for, by allowing himself to become the helpless tool of a variety of spirits, of whom he knows nothing save what the latter permit him to know, he opens, unknown to himself, a door of communication between the two worlds, through which emerge the blind forces of Nature lurking in the astral light, as well as good and bad spirits. . . .
>
> To doubt magic is to reject History itself, as well as the testimony of ocular witnesses thereof, during a period embracing over 4,000 years. . . .

She went on to write of ancient theurgists who knew the science of discerning spirits, who protected the mediums of their time—pythonesses and sibyls—through their power of controlling the "spirits," allowing only good influences to approach the sensitives. Then she wrote: "Such is the explanation of Magic—the real, existing, *White* or Sacred Magic, which ought to be in the hands of science now, and would be, if science had profited by the lessons which Spiritualism has inductively taught for these last twenty-seven years."

There is intimation here, of what might have happened if the explanations of psychical phenomena afforded by H.P.B. had been taken seriously and made the basis of another sort of psychological science, research, and therapy. At the outset, then, the Theosophical Movement was very broadly based: through its agent and messenger, it made wide appeal to the best minds of the time, in terms of major questions and mysteries. A similar appeal and offer was again made, later, when H.P.B. in India proposed that the full resources of the Society be placed at the disposal of the London Society for Psychical Research (*Theosophist* III, 239; IV, 72); but the doors of conventional science were slammed in her face, this time with the added insult and injury of an "investigation" which declared her an impostor, charlatan, and fraud. By such means the scope of the Movement was narrowed to the efforts of Theosophists, who were hardly numerous, and given to quarrelling among themselves; yet the faithful ones, though few, were sufficient to justify the enormous expenditure of energy represented by the recorded literature of the teachings of Theosophy, and to vindicate less publicized efforts of H.P.B. that were intended to establish the nucleus

referred to in the first object of the original Society.

Her labors, as she so often said, were for the future. If past centuries can be taken as a guide, each time a Teacher comes there is a deliberate attempt to broaden the influence of the Movement, so that increasing numbers may be affected and benefited by the timeless spiritual teachings. As the cycles of progressive awakening succeed one another, moving toward that climactic epoch when there will be a full incarnation of mind, each Promethean mission seeks to light more fires, and fires of brighter flame; for each cycle, building upon the past, holds greater opportunities for awakening and growth. So, in the years to come, the initial undertaking of the Movement, however superficially identified, may be very widely based.

The Origin of Man

There are things, perhaps, that may have escaped the *far-seeing* —but not *all-seeing*—eyes of our modern naturalists; yet it is Nature herself who undertakes to furnish the missing links. Agnostic speculative thinkers have to choose between the version given by the Secret Doctrine of the East, and the hopelessly materialistic Darwinian and Biblical accounts of the origin of man; between no soul and no spiritual evolution, and the Occult doctrine which repudiates "Special creation" and the "Evolutionist" Anthropogenesis equally.

Again, to take up the question of "Spontaneous generation"; life—as science shows—has not always reigned on this terrestrial plane. There was a time when even the Haeckelian Moneron—that simple globule of Protoplasm—had not yet appeared at the bottom of the seas. Whence came the *Impulse* which caused the molecules of Carbon, Nitrogen, Oxygen, etc., to group themselves into the *Urschleim* of Oken, that organic "slime," now christened protoplasm. What were the prototypes of the Monera? They, at least, could not have fallen in meteorites from other globes already formed, Sir W. Thomson's wild theory to this effect, not withstanding. And if *they have* so fallen; if our Earth got its supply of life-germs from other planets; who, or *what,* had carried them into those planets?

—H. P. Blavatsky

HIDDEN HINTS IN THE SECRET DOCTRINE

(From p. 192 to p. 200, Vol. I.)

THE ASTRAL LIGHT is not in its nature truth revealing or "good." Note 2, p. 197. "It stands in the same relation to Akâsa and *Anima Mundi* as Satan stands to the Deity. They are one and the same thing *seen from two aspects.*" It may be said that the astral light is the next step above material concerns. It is the first field into which the seer steps in his progress, but it is dangerous because misleading, and misleading because it reverses all things, as well as being the chief reservoir for the bad or material deeds and thoughts of men. Because it is strange, new, and extraordinary, it influences those who see in it, since it presents images of a weird character, and just from its newness and vividness those who see in it are apt to consider it to be of consequence. It is to be studied but not depended upon. Somewhat as the brain has to accustom itself to the reversed image on the retina—turning it straight by effort—so the inner senses have to become accustomed to the reversals made by the Astral Light.

THE FALL INTO GENERATION is explained from p. 192 to p. 198, Stanza V. Necessarily this raises the question "Why any fall whatever?" The author says: "It was the Fall of Spirit into generation, not the fall of mortal man." Hence, if this be true, man has not fallen, but is, for this period of evolution, on the way upward. Spirit in order "to become self-conscious must pass through every cycle of being culminating in its highest point on earth in man. . . . It is an unconscious negative abstraction. Its purity is inherent, not acquired by merit; hence, to become the highest Dhyan Chohan it is necessary for each Ego to attain to full self-consciousness as a human, that is, a conscious, being—Man." (192-193) So the question, why any fall if it was pure originally, is based on the assumption that to remain in a state of unconscious abstraction is better. This cannot, however, be so. When a period of evolution begins, with spirit at one end of the pole and matter at the other, it is absolutely necessary for spirit to proceed through experience in matter in order that self-consciousness may be acquired. It is a "fall" into matter so far

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NOTE.—The first part of this article by Mr. Judge was first printed in the *Path*, September, 1891; the second, in October, 1891.

as the fact is concerned, but so far as the result and the object in view it is neither fall nor rise, but the carrying out of the immutable law of the nature of spirit and matter. We ignorantly call it a fall or a curse, because our lower consciousness does not see the great sweep of the cycles nor apprehend the mighty purpose entertained.

Following the lines of the philosophy elsewhere laid down, we see that at the close of each grand period of evolution some Egos will have failed to attain the goal, and thus some spirit—if we may say—is left over to be again, at a new period, differentiated into Egos who shall, helped by Egos of the past now become Dhyan Chohans, once more struggle upward. Such is the immense and unending struggle.

States and Planes of Consciousness in Kosmos and Man, p. 199, 2nd and 3rd para. It is here stated that of the seven planes of consciousness three are above the entire chain of globes to which the earth belongs, and that the earth is in the lowest of the lower four. But in man, as said here, there are seven *states* of consciousness which correspond to these seven cosmical *planes*. He is to "attune the three higher states in himself to the three higher planes in Kosmos." Necessarily he must have in him centres or seats of energy correspondingly, and, as the author points out, he must awaken those seats to activity, to life, before he can attune them to the higher planes. They are dormant, asleep as it were.

First and Seventh Globes of the chain are in the first globe of the chain—A—the whole model of the succeeding globes is made or laid down, and upon that evolution proceeds up to the 7th, where, all having reached the highest stage of perfection after seven rounds, the complete model is fully realized. This is distinctly hinted in the note, for she says: "not the world as it existed in the mind of the Deity, but a world made as a first model, to be followed and improved upon by the worlds which succeed it physically—though deteriorating in purity." The reader will remember that in another place it is plainly said that on Globe A man appears, but that in the second round the process changes. If we assume, as we must, conscious Beings at work in the scheme of evolution, they have to create the mental model, as it were, of the whole planetary chain, and this has to be done at the time of the first globe. The plan is impressed on all the atoms or particles which are to take part in the evolution, and is preserved intact in that plane. The seventh globe is the receiver of the entire result of evolution in each round, and transfers

it once more to Globe A, where it proceeds as before, and again the whole mass of evoluting beings is impressed with the original plan. This is repeated for every round.

THE THREE HIGHER PLANES OF CONSCIOUSNESS spoken of in third note to diagram on page 200 as being inaccessible to human consciousness as yet, does not involve a contradiction. For the attuning of our three higher *states* of consciousness to the three higher *planes* is possible, although attainment to those planes is impossible for ordinary human consciousness. The attempt has to be made so as to come into harmony in ourselves with those planes, so that the potentialities may be made active and development of new faculties made possible.

(From p. 200 to p. 212, Vol. I.)

FUNCTION OF COMETS. Comets are the wanderers who, in the great struggle and rush of matter in any place where a system of worlds is to come into existence, act as aggregators or collectors of the cosmic matter until at last sufficient collections are made to cause the beginning of globes. Italics on p. 201, Vol. I.

CYCLES. There is always much discussion respecting this vast and interesting subject, not only in theosophical circles but outside as well. Indeed, the discussion was begun ages before our T.S. was formed. It will hardly be finished in our life. The dispute or difficulty has not been as to whether there are cycles governing men and affairs, for the most materialistic are wont to talk of the cycles or recurrence of diseases, wars, and the like, but about when any cycle begins, and especially the larger ones. One of the Moon's cycles is known, and that of the great sidereal vault is approximated, but when we come to such as the latter there is considerable vagueness as to what was the state of things 25,000 years ago. On page 202 of vol. I. the hint is given that the fundamental basis controlling number and ground-work of the cycles is laid in the very beginning of the cosmic struggle anterior to the aggregation of matter into globes and suns. For (at foot p. 202):

> "This is the basic and fundamental stone of the secret cycles. . . ." The assertion that all the worlds (stars, planets, etc.)— as soon as a nucleus of primordial substance in the *laya* (undifferentiated) state is informed by the freed principles of a just *deceased* sidereal body—become first comets, and then Suns, to cool down to inhabitable worlds, is a teaching as old as the Rishis.

Now in each system the "struggle" is different from every other, a different proportion arises, and, the percentage of loss or remainder being variable, the cyclic bases in each system differ from others. It is very plain, then, that our present-day scientists can know nothing of these original differences and must remain ignorant of the true cycles. Only the eagle eye of the high Adept can see these numbers as they are written upon the great screen of time, and in the whispers that reach us from the ancient mysteries can be found the information we are seeking. Who shall hear aright?

THE VERY BEGINNING. Definitely as to the very beginning of manifestation—not of this little system of ours, but of the one vast whole—it is not possible nor permissible to speak. But a hint of seductive nature is thrown out on p. 203, 3rd para., where, taking us back to the first act in the great drama of which our puny play is but a short sentence, H.P.B. says that the secret science declares that when the one great all has been thrown out into manifestation seven special differentiations of IT appear, and from those seven all the countless fires, suns, planets, and stars are lighted and go forth. So that, although in various systems of worlds the cycles and the numbers and bases may differ and be any whole number or fractional number, the great and perfect number is still *seven*. But no man now among us can understand that great *seven* when it includes all numbers the mind may reach by chance or by calculation.

—W.Q.J.

TRUE KNOWLEDGE

The allegory of the tower of Babel applies to the present times. Everything is in confusion, everyone talking his own gibberish—and nobody listening. I said "nobody"—but some are; a few realize that none of these things bring knowledge. All that can be done is to let the lights so shine that all who will may seek it, thus sowing for future harvest. It would be a hopeless task were it not for Reincarnation; so the great effort should be to promulgate the fundamental principles of Unity, of Brotherhood, of Karma and Reincarnation.

—ROBERT CROSBIE

MAN AND NATURE

IT is difficult for the man of today to comprehend the development of the body by the forces of nature, as set forth in Theosophical teachings. Nor can the role of the astral body, which supplies the mold upon which Nature completes its work of materialization, be easily understood. Why? Because personal identification with the physical body has become virtually universal. The astral, being only peripherally susceptible to the present means of scientific research, is unknown or denied, while the ambiguous word of the clairvoyant is, perhaps rightly, ignored. More and more, however, man's dependence upon what is called the natural environment is strongly felt. Efforts are being made to restore what has been destroyed by the uprush of our civilization and to preserve that which is still untouched and unpolluted.

But Nature, too, is enveloped in mystery, and will remain so as long as its three planes of conscious life are unrecognized. In man the stream of consciousness divides at a point between higher and lower Manas—the two aspects of mind—so often sundered during the present Iron Age. But there is no such division in Nature, which has never lost its homogeneity. From the infinitesimal protozoan to the wildlife of forest and tundra; from the minnows of our streams to the great whales of the oceans, all evolve in orderly succession by natural impulse—the vital energy animating all forms of life. And the flow of consciousness differs only in degree. It is evident that mindless man also, before the lighting up of Manas, was indeed a child of Nature.

Knowledge falls into two categories: on the one hand, that which is associated with the brain and memory; on the other, and by far the least sought after, that of spirit. Brain-knowledge is obtained through our present theory of education from books, lectures, films and tapes, observation and experiment. In these areas memory plays an important role. Much may thus be learned about the body, the functions of the various glands, and the effect of the emotions upon them, but little is revealed of the true nature of man, and naught about the soul. The Theosophical student, standing upon the threshold of occultism, must strive to *become* that which is

taught, depending upon intuition where possible, seeking through meditative reflection to open the inner doors of enlightenment.

One can, however, learn from *The Secret Doctrine* the basis of what occultism has to say about Nature. In order to understand, there is need to turn away from the outer plane and attempt to conceive of higher planes to which belong the forces and intelligences behind all natural phenomena. The teachings relate to a vastness hardly comprehensible to the finite mind, but a vastness, nevertheless, that must forever remain as a background to all. How else can we gain knowledge in the face of the statement: "Nature and Space are one." (*S.D.* I, 555 fn.)

The Secret Doctrine always places stepping-stones for the searching mind, provided it is ready to expand the ordinary meanings of words and ideas. Thus this simple but profound statement of fact relative to the unseen universe is a helpful guide: "What is called 'unconscious Nature' is in reality an aggregate of forces manipulated by semi-intelligent beings (elementals) guided by Higher Planetary Spirits." (*S.D.* I, 277.) The correspondence of this all-inclusive system to the human constitution is evident, for the body was born, so to speak, of earth, and was raised by spirit to the possession of self-conscious mind, to serve as a link between the progressive natural impulse and the creativeness of self-induced and self-devised effort. That this divine purpose is often betrayed by individuals, nations, and races, is doubtless seen in the heavy Karma of the twentieth century.

It may be well to reflect that destructive thinking and actions bring about cataclysms. If Nature is in reality an aggregate of forces, it follows that the harmony of these forces can be disturbed by so dynamic a part of the natural system as the human mind. "We produce Causes and these awaken the corresponding powers of the sidereal world; which powers are magnetically and irresistibly attached to—and react upon—those who produced these causes; whether such persons are practically the evil doers, or simply Thinkers who brood mischief." (*S.D.* I, 124.) Conversely, those who uphold the moral law will attract the corresponding powers. ". . . man ought to be ever striving to help the divine evolution of *Ideas* by becoming to the best of his ability a *co-worker with Nature* in the cyclic task." (*S.D.* I, 280.)

To become such a co-worker is not easily achieved. There are no courses to attend and no hand-books that map procedure. There

is, however, the possibility of growing inwardly sensitive to higher planes by becoming indifferent to the lure of earthly matters and by devotion to the ideal. Let the mind, for instance, dwell deeply upon the *idea* of brotherhood, its difficulties being understood, its advantages appreciated, its moral power envisioned, and eventually the true meaning of brotherhood will reveal itself. Any individual practicing a similar transcendental discipline relative to any ideal will gradually become co-worker of the powers of higher planes of nature.

At its birth Western civilization thought the world to be flat, the sky a dome in which the Creator had studded the stars to give light at night when the encircling sun had sunk below the horizon. Such a belief gave Nature and space little in common. To the ascending astronauts of our own time, Nature as known on earth rapidly disappears from sight, while a dead moon banishes thought of life. Thenceforth their activities become virtually archeological. But the invisible planes have much to reveal to those whose sight can penetrate to them. "Atoms fill the immensity of Space, and by their continuous vibration *are* that MOTION which keeps the wheels of Life perpetually going." (*S.D.* I, 633.) No statement could be more relevant to our subject. It shows man existing in a vast flux of which he is unconscious, but his oneness with all life in all kingdoms becomes evident.

Let us now turn to a description of a seer's vision, for better comprehension of these unseen forces (*S.D.* I, 633-34):

> . . . Standing on an open plain, on a mountain summit especially, and gazing into the vast vault above and the spatial infinitudes around, the whole atmosphere seems ablaze with them, the air soaked through with these dazzling coruscations. At times, the intensity of their motion produces flashes like the Northern Lights during the *Aurora Borealis*. The sight is so marvellous, that, as the Seer gazes into this inner world, and feels the scintillating points shoot past him, he is filled with awe at the thought of other, still greater mysteries, that lie beyond, and within, this radiant ocean. . . .

It is thus that we, as students, are given a glimpse of a mystery beyond the threshold, in order that we may form a true conception of Nature's unseen immensity and, being part of Nature, to partake of our heritage in truth.

letters · questions · comment

The Voice of the Silence *says that "rigid justice rules the world." Can mercy have any role, then, in a universe governed by justice?*

Justice is the concept of universal law expressed in moral terms. But the same can hardly be said of the idea of mercy, as the word is commonly understood. As a metaphysical concept it has virtually no justification. Mercy is an essentially personal quality, in-as-much as a *person,* never an abstract principle, chooses to be either merciful or vengeful. Used in a cosmic sense, mercy becomes the theological idea that a personal, external God, exercising the same kind of power in the universe that an "all-wise" but autocratic parent does toward erring children, can set aside the consequences of human action, shielding men, through his favor, from the punishment they really deserve. Even if we no longer accept this as a literal belief, its psychology still exerts a powerful influence in our thinking. For beings who are themselves gods in their innermost natures, engaged in recovering awareness of their spiritual identity, mercy in this sense seems a confusing idea.

It should not be difficult to see that for one who recognizes that "rigid justice," or the Law of Karma, rules the world, the meaning of the word "mercy" must inevitably change. Under Karma, no individual pretends to dispense "justice," although there may be circumstances in which one must try to act justly. The point, here, is that the wise man, knowing that "the ripple of effects must run its course," will not attempt to "interfere" with the operation of Karma, but will do what lies in his power to help others to gain an understanding of how the law works, for only in this way can they be relieved of its penalties. One who suffers from self-created pain is helped by growing into an appreciation of his part in causing it, and "mercy" may thus be seen as the feeling and attitude of mind of those who devote their efforts to spreading this sort of understanding. Friendliness and kindliness are merciful qualities, and they are most merciful when they assist the victim of Karma to a recognition that his own growth in strength, fortitude, and constructive action is the way to deliverance. But to be truly merciful in this sense may require deep insight into how human beings learn,

as the story of the Buddha and Kisagotami suggests. Practical wisdom of this sort comes only to those who study the art of self-forgetfulness. The principles of that art seem embodied in the counsel Prajapati gave to his sons: "Be restrained, be liberal, be merciful; it is the death of selfishness."

Of the ultimate nature of mercy, which is compassion, must be those men who, further advanced than we, return voluntarily to earth again and again, no longer out of their own necessity, but to remind and instruct their younger brothers of man's high potentialities and obligations as spiritual beings. Their coming renews and focuses the inspiration to replace the psychic molds of habit with a dynamic equilibrium more responsive to the higher mind and awakened will, bringing greater awareness of the workings of that "unseen and unknown law *which adjusts wisely, intelligently and equably* each effect to its cause, tracing the latter back to its producer." The effect of their presence is not to interfere with the working out of Karma. Sharing the same spiritual heritage ourselves, our need is not for someone to bestow salvation upon us. But the lasting influence exerted by such men as Buddha or Plato becomes living testament to the fact that the universe does have an inherent orderliness which is the imprint of the intelligence underlying all form.

Compassionate action, then, might be assessed in terms of whether it tends to arouse thought more than emotion; whether, if it creates pain, it also provides ways of alleviating it; whether it stimulates imagination, or only precipitates fear; whether it arouses the desire to understand instead of fostering passive acceptance.

What is "will power"? Does improving the health of our minds improve the will also?

From Mr. Judge's statement about will in his preface to *The Ocean of Theosophy,* we can infer that because of its all-pervasive nature, the will is profitably studied only through its connection with the philosophy as a whole. Again, in his article "Meditation, Concentration, Will" (last published in August), there is the suggestive remark: "Patanjali does not go into it [the will] at all. It seems to be inferred by him through his aphorisms." Mr. Judge concludes his article by saying:

> The good and bad man alike have will, the child and the aged, the wise and the lunatic. It is therefore a power devoid in itself of moral quality. That quality must be added by man.

So the truth must be that will acts according to desire, or, as the older thinkers used to put it, "behind will stands desire." This is why the child, the savage, the lunatic, and the wicked man has intensified his desires, and with that his will. The lunatic has but few desires, and draws all his will force into these; the savage is free from convention, from the various ideas, laws, rules, and suppositions to which the civilized person is subject, and has nothing to distract his will. So to make our will strong we must have fewer desires. Let those be high, pure, and altruistic; they will give us strong will.

No mere practice will develop will *per se*, for it exists forever, fully developed in itself. But practice will develop in us the power to call on that will which is ours. Will and Desire lie at the doors of Meditation and Concentration. If we desire truth with the same intensity that we had formerly wished for success, money, or gratification, we will speedily acquire meditation and possess concentration. If we do all our acts, small and great, every moment, for the sake of the whole human race, as representing the Supreme Self, then every cell and fibre of the body and inner man will be turned in one direction, resulting in perfect concentration. . . . Let us meditate on that which is in us as the Highest Self, concentrate upon it, and will to work for it as dwelling in every human heart.

It seems, therefore, that mental health would not affect the will itself, but would certainly influence the manner in which we are able to exercise it. Since "behind will stands desire," if desires are few and altruistic, this would tend to strengthen the will. When asked about the will, Mr. Crosbie said:

Will is the energy of Consciousness expressed in action, on any plane of manifestation. There are many aspects of the Will, from the ordinary one which is "the will to live" and is expressed in the automatic physical action, such as the heart-beat, digestion, etc.; that of the actions following an ordinary thought, desires and wants; that which is developed by various forms of practice; to the highest phase, that of the Spiritual Will. This phase is developed by true unselfishness, a sincere and full desire to be guided, ruled and assisted by the Higher Self, and to do that which, and suffer or enjoy whatever, the Higher Self has in store for one by way of discipline or experience. (*Answers to Questions on The Ocean of Theosophy*, p. 109.)

REPLANTING DISEASES FOR FUTURE USE

THE ills I wish to speak of now are those of the body. Our moral nature will be purified and ennobled, widened and strengthened, by attention to the precepts of the saints and sages who through all the ages continue speaking for our benefit. And I refer to these with a view to "mind-cure" and "metaphysical healing."

In the article on the "Cure of Diseases" I stated our real ground of objection to the practices demonstrated variously as the practitioners have been Theosophists, Christians, or followers of the mind healers, to be directed to methods which in fact introduce a new sort of palliative that throws back into our inner, hidden planes of life diseases otherwise *passing down and out* through the natural gateway, our bodily frame.

A consideration of this subject requires that we enquire awhile into the complete nature of man. This enquiry has been made before by much greater minds than mine, and I only hand on what they have found and what I have corroborated for myself. Mind-healers and Spiritual Scientists and the rest do not make any reference to this subtle nature of ours except to admit thought to be powerful and to say that the "spiritual body is pure and free from disease." Mind itself is not described by them, nor is it stated that the "spiritual body" has any anatomy possible of description. But the field of Theosophic research is not devoid of an anatomical enumeration, so to say, of the parts of the inner body—the "spiritual body" of some of these schools—nor of the "mind" spoken of by them all.

The mind is *manas* of the Hindus. It is a part of the immortal man. The "spiritual body" is not immortal. It is compounded of astral body with the passions and desires. *Mind* is the container of the efficient causes of our circumstances, our inherent character and the seeds that sprout again and again as physical diseases as well as those purely mental. It is the mover who is either voluntary in his motion, free if it will, or moved hither and thither by every object and influence and colored by every idea. From life to life it occupies body after body, using a new brain instrument in

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each incarnation. As Patanjali put it ages ago, in mind lie planted all seeds with self-reproductive power inherent in them, only waiting for time and circumstances to sprout again. Here are the causes for our diseases. Product of thought truly, but thought long finished and now transformed into cause beyond our present thought. Lying like tigers by the edge of the jungle's pool ready to spring when the hour arrives, they may come forward accompanied by counteractions due to other causes, or they may come alone.

When these seeds sprout and liberate their forces they show themselves in diseases in the body, where they exhaust themselves. To attack them with the forces belonging to the plane of mind is to force them again to their hiding place, to inhibit their development, to stop their exhaustion and transfer to the grosser levels of life. They are forcibly dragged back, only to lie waiting once more for their natural expression in some other life. That natural expression is through a body, or rather through the lowest vehicle in use in any evolutionary period.

This is a great wheel that ever revolves, and no man can stop it. To imagine we can escape from any cause connected with us is to suppose that law and order desert the manifested universe. No such divorce is possible. We must work everything out to the last item. The moment we evolve a thought and thus a cause, it must go on producing its effects, and sweeping down the great evolutionary current in order to rise again. To suppose we can stop this ebb and flow is chimerical in the extreme. Hence the great sages have always said we have to let the Karmic effects roll on while we set new and better causes in motion, and that even the perfect sage had to endure in his bodily frame that which belongs to it through Karma.

The inner anatomical structure should also be known. The ethereal body has its own currents—nerves, for want of a better word, changes and method of growth and action, just as the gross body has. It is, in fact, the real body, for it seldom alters throughout life, while the physical counterpart changes every moment, its atoms going and coming upon the matrix or model furnished by the ethereal body.

The inner currents emanate from their own centers and are constantly in motion. They are affected by thoughts and the reflection of the body in its physiological changes. They each act upon the other incessantly. (Every center of the inner body has its appropriate correspondent in the physical one, which it affects and

through which it is in turn acted upon.) It is by means of these subtle currents—called vital airs when translated from the Sanscrit—that impressions are conveyed to the mind above, and through them also are the extraordinary feats of the *séance* room and the Indian Yogi accomplished.

And just as one may injure his body by ignorantly using drugs or physical practices, so can the finer currents and nerves of the inner man be thrown out of adjustment if one in pride or ignorance attempts, uninstructed, to deal with them.

The seeds of disease being located primarily in the mind, they begin to exhaust themselves through the agency of the inner currents that carry the appropriate vibrations down upon the physical plane. If left to themselves—aside from palliations and aids in throwing off—they pass out into the great crucible of nature and one is free from them forever. Therefore pain is said to be a kind friend who relieves the real man of a load of sin.

Now the moment the practices of the mind-curer are begun, what happens is that the hidden inner currents are violently grasped, and, if concentration is persisted in, the downward vibrations are thrown up and altered so as to carry back the cause to the mind, where it is replanted with the addition of the purely selfish desires that led to the practice. It is impossible to destroy the cause; it must be allowed to transform itself. And when it is replaced in the mind, it waits there until an opportunity occurs either in this life or in the next rebirth.

In some cases the physical and psychological structures are not able to stand the strain, so that sometimes the return of the downward vibrations is so great and sudden that insanity results; in other cases disease with violent characteristics sets in.

The high tone of thought enjoined by some schools of healers has the effect of making the cause of trouble sink deeper into hiding, and probably adds to concentration. But any thought would do as well, provided concentration is persisted in, for it is the concentration that makes the effect, and not the philosophy. The system of affirming and denying makes concentration easier.

For when the practitioner begins, he immediately brings to play certain inner forces by virtue of his dwelling on one thing. The veriest savages do the same. They have long taught it for various purposes, and their ideals go no higher than food and sleep, fetishes and superstitions.

When one is thus operating on another who is willing, the change of inner nerve currents is brought about by sympathy, which in these cases is the same as the phenomenon so well known in physics by the name of *induction*. When a person is operated on—or against, I call it—the effect is either repelled or produced. If produced, it is by the same induction brought about without his knowledge and because he was not stronger than the operator.

Here is the danger again. The schools of hypnotists are teaching how to do it. The mind-curers and "metaphysicians" are doing the same. An army of possibilities lurks under it all; for already there are those practitioners who deliberately practice against their opponents, sitting day after day to paralyze the efforts of other people. It is like dynamite in the hands of a child. Some day it will explode, and those who taught it ought to be warned against. The world could get along with what disease there is, if it only turned attention to high ethics and altruistic endeavor. For after a few centuries of right living the nations would have purged themselves and built up a right moral building well founded on the rocks of true philosophy, charity and love.

WILLIAM Q. JUDGE.

THE SEARCH FOR MEANING

Man's search for meaning is a primary force in his life and not a "secondary rationalization" of instinctual drives. This meaning is unique and specific in that it must and can be fulfilled by him alone; only then does it achieve a significance which will satisfy his own *will* to meaning. There are some authors who contend that meanings and values are "nothing but defense mechanisms, reaction formations and sublimations." But as for myself, I would not be willing to live merely for the sake of my "defense mechanisms," nor would I be ready to die merely for the sake of my "reaction formations." Man, however, is able to live and even to die for the sake of his ideals and values!

—VIKTOR E. FRANKL

"THE KEY TO THEOSOPHY"

THE last major work by H. P. Blavatsky which appeared during her lifetime, published in 1889, was the *Key*. Its full title is *"The Key to Theosophy,* being a clear exposition in the form of question and answer, of the Ethics, Science, and Philosophy for the study of which the Theosophical Society has been founded." The need for such a text had become manifest. Seldom if ever had an educational project of such magnitude as the Theosophical Movement been undertaken. It proposed a reform of far-reaching moral and intellectual implications, founded on conceptions of man, nature, and deity requiring the utmost clarity of expression, since these ideas were endlessly elaborated in the body of the philosophical literature that had already been recorded. The *Key* was written to provide a definitive foundation for the structure of the Theosophical metaphysics, cosmology, psychology, and ethics.

In retrospect, one sees the importance of the timing of the launching of the Theosophical Movement and publication of the books containing the re-presentation of the ancient Wisdom Religion in the idiom of modern thought. There is a sense in which the Movement accomplished a great Restoration—by no means yet complete, but strongly begun—a restoration to mankind of a sense of life's meaning and of human destiny. Theosophy spoke to the question of identity, the problem of "reality," so dwarfed by the reductionist tendencies of scientific thinking, and gave the moral ideas of duty, responsibility, and brotherhood a rational foundation. At the same time, the daring of the majestic scope of the Theosophic synthesis showed that this effort was made not only in behalf of the confusions of the nineteenth century, but also for our own time, when those confusions have been vastly multiplied, and for the centuries which lie ahead. Theosophy was not presented as a speculative study of the universe and its inhabitants, but as knowledge which had been garnered through search and investigation by the wisest men of the past. The time-scale suggested for evolution outreached by far even the wildest of scientific speculations, while the conception it affords of graded and interdependent

development is far more complex than any biological or socio-psychological theory of the present.

From these considerations, it is clear that the audience for a book like *The Key to Theosophy* should be a growing one. Comparatively speaking, its readership was small in 1889; today, the questions it sets out to answer are now much more in the minds of people at large, although they may not yet have been formulated at the level of the philosophical discourse of the *Key*. But today the mind of the race is quickening from a variety of causes. Already some of the terms of the Theosophical teaching have become commonplaces of the thought of a wondering and questing generation. Even if, as yet, the search for answers seems too much concerned with the dilutions and shallow versions of ancient thought, the cycle of inquiry is under way, and the frothiness of its preliminary focus and preoccupations may belong only to its initial phase. Sooner or later, there will be many whose deep egoic callings will be satisfied by nothing less than the pure currents of philosophic truth.

The explanation given in the *Key,* under the heading "Why is Theosophy Accepted?", applies today as it did in 1889. Both the interest and opposition aroused by Theosophy, H.P.B. wrote, were the result of—

> . . . a conviction on the part of the many, and *knowledge* by a few, that there must be somewhere a philosophical and religious system which shall be scientific and not merely speculative. *Finally,* a belief, perhaps, that such a system must be sought for in teachings far antedating any modern faith.
>
> ENQ. But how did this system come to be put forward just now?
>
> THEO. Just because the time was found to be ripe, which fact is shown by the determined effort of so many earnest students to reach *the truth,* at whatever cost and wherever it may be concealed. Seeing this, its custodians permitted that some portions at least of that truth should be proclaimed. Had the formation of the Theosophical Society been postponed a few years longer, one half of the civilized nations would have become by this time rank materialists, and the other half anthropomorphists and phenomenalists.

Already it is possible to see a measure of confirmation of the implications of this statement, in the increasing rejection of scientific materialism, among leading scientists as well as by humanist thinkers. The old religions are moribund, and the new emphasis,

even at the level of psychic practices, is now on the idea of self-transformation and individual growth. Great hazards remain, and other tendencies of a less hopeful nature are plainly evident, yet the leaven of the nineteenth-century impartation of the age-old teachings has done its work, and the *idea* of inner spiritual truth, whatever the attending misconceptions, is no longer forgotten and neglected.

So, more than ever, the *Key* may be recognized as a text for the present and the future. It is a book which clearly shows that the aim of Theosophy is to unite Ethics (or the science of ideal human character) with Science (concerned with investigation of facts and the establishment of verifiable general laws), and Philosophy (the body of principles uniting all divisions of learning). This aim may be gradually fulfilled through demonstrations that there is indeed a "thread doctrine" underlying and interconnecting every branch of human knowledge.

SILENT TRUTHS

Socrates was not poisoned because he invented new truths and new gods but because he annoyed and troubled everyone with his new truths and new gods. Had he remained quietly at home and written books or taught at the Academy, people would have left him in peace, as they left Plato in peace. . . . The death of Socrates did not by any means result from the clash of two orders of opposing ideas; Socrates perished because he did not know how, or did not wish, to be silent. Men are afraid not so much of truths, new or old, as of preachers of truths. For truth does not pursue or trouble anyone, while preachers are a very disagreeable lot, in perpetual disquietude and agitation, leaving no one in peace.

In brief, Socrates was condemned to death because he poisoned the existence of the Athenians. . . . Had he only been content to awaken himself or his friends, he would have been left in peace. People would even have repeated his words about the "true awakening."

And this is what happened at the end: no sooner had Socrates died than everyone began to sing his praises. It was known that he was no longer dangerous. Silent truths do not frighten anyone.

—LEV SHETOV

on the lookout

"Forgotten Key"

At a meeting of the International Congress of Learned Societies in the Field of Religion, held recently in Los Angeles, the religion of the American Indian received appreciative attention (Los Angeles *Times,* Sept. 4). Dr. Ake Hultkrantz, of the University of Stockholm, says that the Indian concept of the unity of man with nature is "a forgotten key to a viable theology for modern man" and a valuable "window" into the past, through which the Stone Age religions may be studied and more light gained on all the religions of the present. Dr. Hultkrantz does not see this as investigation of the bizarre or anachronistic beliefs of an alien people, but rather as a study which will enlighten us on the workings of the human mind in general, because of the beliefs held in common by many diverse peoples. Ideas which he says deserve study are:

> The idea of the culture hero, who is present in the primitive faiths of many other people; the nature of unity and pluralism simultaneously—that is, of many gods being manifestations of one unity or god; and the independent nature of the myth in Indian religious beliefs.

Past "Nature Cultures"

One neglected aspect of Indian religion, Dr. Hultkrantz says, is the "interplay between religion on the one hand and culture and society on the other." A Canadian speaker, J. E. W. Newberry, called the Indian idea of wholeness a "spiritual phenomenon," adding: "The Indian was not a pagan nor an idolator, but recognized that all is spirit and all spirits are united." He then spoke of the impact of European culture on the Indians:

> Occupation of the Western continents by races of Europe has been called inevitable. But the calculated, methodical, determined, cynical destruction of the nature cultures and peoples found here was a global crime and the most notable vandalism of all history.
>
> Through this cruel deception the free peoples of this land were reduced to the withdrawal and apathy they exhibit today. We came to bring them a better way of life, but I fear we have destroyed them instead.

While Dr. Newberry supposes that the core of native religious concepts is essentially Christian, there is compelling justice in his conviction that by acknowledging the Indian concept of "wholeness," we might find the means to remedy the historic wrongs, and that in becoming able to help the Indian out of his "slough of withdrawal and apathy," we would also humanize ourselves.

Distorted Parallels

David Pilbeam of Yale, writing in the *New York Times Magazine* (Sept. 3), protests the behaviorist arguments which trace man's aggressive tendencies to an assumed animal heredity. Although Mr. Pilbeam does not question the view of man as a primate, he quite frankly rejects as mistaken the conclusion that human behavior can be "extrapolated" from the actions of animals. On the works of such behaviorists as Robert Ardrey, Desmond Morris, and Konrad Lorenz in the last decade, he comments:

> All purport to document, often in interminable detail, the supposedly surprising truth that man is an animal. Also they argue that his behavior—particularly his aggressive, status-oriented, territorial and sexual behavior—is somehow out of tune with the needs of the modern world, that his behavior is under genetic control and is largely determined by our animal heritage, and that there is little we can do but accept our grotesque natures. If we insist on trying to change ourselves, they argue, we must realize that we have almost no room for maneuver, for natural man is far more like other animals than he would care to admit. . . .

"Pernicious Rubbish"

> However, I would describe these general arguments as rubbish, and pernicious rubbish; they are based upon misinterpretation of ethological studies and a total ignorance of the rich variety of human behavior documented by anthropologists. At a time when so many people wish to reject the past because it has no meaning and can contribute nothing, it is perhaps a little ironic that arguments about man's innate and atavistic depravity should have so much appeal. The world *is* in a mess; people *are* unpleasant to one another; that much is true. I can only suppose that argument about the inevitability of all the nastiness not only absolves people in some way of the responsibility for their actions, but allows us also to sit back and positively enjoy it all.

Unnatural Conditions

Mr. Pilbeam uses studies of baboons as an example of how com-

parisons of the behavior of men and beasts have been used to support misleading interpretations. The contents of reports that reach the mass media, he says, emphasize that baboons are highly aggressive. They live in stable, male-dominated groups, hierarchy of privilege being established by physical strength. Other studies, however, among them work by Thelma Rowell, an English primatologist, in which forest baboons in Uganda were removed to cages under highly competitive conditions, indicate that this commonly touted behavior is the result of abnormal tensions and conditions.

Little Aggression

Moreover, the groups most often described live in game parks subject to the tensions caused by numerous predators, including humans. Under natural conditions, the interrelationships within the baboon community do not grow into rigidly defensive or hostile behavior patterns. The author concludes:

> If animals are inadequately or abnormally socialized, aggressive behavior becomes distorted and exaggerated. Animals that are correctly socialized in normal habitats, or in richly stimulating artificial ones, show moderate amounts of aggression, and only in certain circumstances. These would be, for example, when an infant is threatened, when a choice item is disputed, when fights have to be interrupted, under certain circumstances when the troop is threatened and occasionally when other species are killed for food.
>
> Under normal conditions, aggression plays little part in other aspects of primate social life. The idea that the function of maleness is to be overbearingly aggressive, to fight constantly and to be dominant makes little evolutionary sense.

The Cooperative Bushmen

Not only is human aggression unjustified by analogy with animals, the attempt at such justification fails to account for the variety in human social behavior, which Mr. Pilbeam regards as culture-determined. From the viewpoint of Theosophy, the egos involved would of course be a decisive factor. Continuing, he speaks of the unaggressive traits of the African Bushmen:

> In certain cultures, status is important, clear-cut and valued; the emphasis placed on caste in Hindu society is an obvious example. At the opposite extreme, though—among the Bushmen of the Kalahari Desert, for example—it is hard to discern; equality and cooperativeness are highly valued qualities in Bushman society, and hence learned by each new generation.

Unsavage "Savages"

> Far from life being "short, brutish and nasty" for these peoples, recent studies show that hunters work on the average only 3 or 4 days each week; the rest of their time is leisure. Further, at least 10 per cent of Bushmen, for example, are past 60 years of age, valued and nurtured by their children. Although they lack large numbers of material possessions, one can never describe such peoples as savages, degenerates or failures.
>
> The men in these societies hunt animals, while the women gather plant food. However, women often scout for game, and in some groups may also hunt smaller animals, while a man returning empty-handed from a day's hunting will almost always gather vegetable food on his way. Thus the division of labor between sexes is not distinct and immutable; it seems to be functional, related to mobility: The women with infants to protect and carry simply cannot move far and fast enough to hunt efficiently.

Injustice to the "Beasts"

Whatever the disposition of the issue of the real origin of the human species, there is an increasing inclination to regard the ape theory as a misleading over-simplification. As Mr. Pilbeam observes:

> There is no evidence to support the view that early man was a violent status-seeking creature; theological and anthropological evidence indicates rather that pre-urban men would have used their evolving cultural capacities to channel and control aggression. To be sure, we are not born empty slates upon which anything can be written; but to believe in the "inevitability of beastliness" is to deny our humanity as well as our primate heritage —and, incidentally, does a grave injustice to the "beasts."

Failed Opportunity

W. S. Merwin's review in the *New York Review of Books* (April 20) of a new translation of the *Popol Vuh* (*The Book of Counsel: The Popol Vuh of the Quiché Maya of Gautemala,* by Munro S. Edmonson) acknowledges more than a document for anthropological study of a literary relic. Merwin sees this Mayan scripture as the literary expression of a people whose sense of themselves, as a people, reaches far back into pre-history. He hopes that this will be disturbing to the reader, since it represents a cultural continuity which all modern Americans might have assimilated as a part of their civilization in the New World, had not the conquista-

dores wantonly destroyed it. Speaking in general of the pre-Colombian literatures of the Americas, he says:

> We come to them as to remnants salvaged from the burned-out libraries of the East, and even as our means of comprehending some of the surviving works appear to improve, they shed light as well on the surrounding void, making clearer how much has been lost. They remind us that the libraries are still burning, in Vietnam and Cambodia, in Latin America, and in our own West, under the auspices of the same unleashed rapacity and self-righteousness that engineered the destruction of our Indies from the beginning.
>
> For unless our concern with these works is nothing but dilettantism, vanity (amateur or professional), and collector's disguise of idleness, one thing that troubles us in their presence is the growing certainty that what has been lost was rightfully ours, a part of ourselves not only in so far as we are Americans, but in so far as we are a people—or people—at all. . . .

"Something Missing"

> Many of the best of the invaders and their descendants have spent much of their lives trying to determine, for their own sakes and ours, just what, in fact, it might mean to be American. The inquiry, more often than not, has bespoken a painful awareness of something missing, of a handicap inherent in the unhealing rawness of their—and our—situation.

Mr. Merwin notes that at the present time, when this awareness is keenest, a new attitude and interest in the value of these works has expressed itself in new scholarship and translations. Of special interest, the reviewer feels, is the determination of Prof. Edmonson to preserve in translation the original poetic form of the *Popol Vuh* —a form common to Central American literature, ancient and modern. His studies led him to conclude that it could not be properly understood if its mode of expression were altered, thus justifying his new translation.

Story of "Beginnings"

The poem itself deals with the origins and history of the Quiché Maya people. The author notes certain characteristics which H.P.B. also identifies as landmarks present in the legends of all ancient scriptures throughout the world. For instance, the reviewer says:

> In the Quiché mythology, as in the mythologies of many other peoples, particularly of the Americas, the present world is seen not as the first but as the latest, the fourth, in a series of

creations. In the introductory legend of the Navajo Where the Two Came to Their Father, which again sets out to tell of "the beginning of people," there is a glimpse, at the start, of a prior world, where the people prayed to "the four mountains" until the mountains lost their strength. "So the people began to wander, and could find no rest." The Navajo story tells of the flood and the emergence of the survivors through the hollows of a reed, into what would become the present world.

Four "Creations"

The *Popol Vuh* falls into four divisions, corresponding with the four successive creations. The first contains a vision of genesis, recounted as a memory, now imperfect, of the particular narrative in the lost sacred codex:

Great was its account
And its description
Of when there was finished
The birth
Of all of heaven
And earth:
The four creations,
The four humiliations,
The knowledge
Of the four punishments,
The rope of tying together,
The line of tying together,
The womb of heaven,
The womb of earth.

Sacred Tree

In *The Secret Doctrine,* H.P.B. often refers to the *Popol Vuh,* indicating that it is one of the most fruitful evidences of a common esoteric symbolism existing throughout the world from ancient times. For instance, she points out that the symbolism of the tree in connection with the evolution of the Great Races is universal:

> The Norse Ask, the Hesiodic Ash-tree, whence issued the men of the generation of bronze, the Third Root-Race, and the *Tzite* tree of the *Popol Vuh,* out of which the Mexican *third* race of men was created, are all one. This may be plainly seen by any reader. But the Occult reason why the Norse Yggdrasil, the Hindu Aswatha, the Gogard, the Hellenic tree of life, and the Tibetan Zampun, are one with the Kabalistic Sephirothal Tree, and even with the Holy Tree made by Ahura Mazda, and the Tree of Eden—who among the western scholars can tell? Nevertheless, the fruits of all those "Trees," whether Pippala or Haoma or yet the more prosaic apple, are the "plants of life," in fact and verity. The prototypes of our races were all enclosed in the microcosmic tree, which grew and developed

> *within and under* the great mundane macrocosmic tree; and the mystery is half revealed in the *Dirghotamas,* where it is said: "Pippala, the sweet fruit of that tree upon which come *spirits who love the science,* and where the gods produce all marvels." (*S.D.* II, 97-8.)

The Universal Symbol

Citing a contemporary report in a later footnote (Vol. II, p. 181), H.P.B. shows that all of these symbols are related to the meaning of the egg, itself a universal symbol:

> In "Hesiod," Zeus creates his *third* race of men out of ash-trees. In the "Popol Vuh" the Third Race of men is created out of the tree *Tzita* and the marrow of the reed called *Sibac.* But Sibac means "egg" in the mystery language of the *Artufas* (or Initiation caves).

Thus comparison of the symbolism belonging to the civilizations of America with that of the East clearly suggests that it is indeed a representation of a universal experience in the history of mankind.

Lost Knowledge

H.P.B. further asserts that it is the actual record of the intellectual and psychological as well as the physical development of humanity through stages now unrecognized by modern physical science. She says (II, 98):

> As in the Gogard, among the luxuriant branches of all those mundane trees, the "Serpent" dwells. But while the Macrocosmic tree is the Serpent of Eternity and of absolute wisdom itself, those who dwell in the Microcosmic tree are the Serpents of the manifested Wisdom. One is the One and All; the others are its *reflected* parts. The "tree" is man himself, of course, and the Serpents dwelling in each, the conscious *Manas,* the connecting link between Spirit and Matter, heaven and earth.

The Secret Doctrine also shows that Christian mythology represents manifestation as beginning with the creation of the physical universe, altering the gods or creative forces into one "God" and confusing the latter with the Unmanifested. This is perhaps one reason why Mr. Merwin finds something "missing" in Western religion, though the correct cosmogony has been preserved in the creation myths of the Quiché Mayas.

Youthful Longings

Writing in the *Saturday Review* (May 6), Peter Marin discusses the revival of evangelical religion among the young. He attempts

to describe the states of mind typical of the psychic climate of the times and to show how they are an outgrowth of ideas that are at the psychological root of our whole culture. As he says at the outset, these longings, bewilderments and anxieties are the common lot, the young being distinguishable from their elders chiefly by their greater sense of desperation. He says:

> What moves the young is only in part the desire for the simple life, religious ecstasy, and justification. There is a more desolate and organic need, the need to reduce the nightmare complexity of things to a manageable form. The Jesus revolution is simply the most recent, popular, and obvious expression of that need. One can find among the young dozens of other disciplines and creeds—Krishna-consciousness, Subud, Zen, Yoga, transcendental meditation—and, beyond those, the whole hazy landscape of pop therapies and enthusiasms. Every passing idea is turned zealously into a faith. The *I Ching,* the Tarot cards, the *Whole Earth Catalog,* and the ephmerides become fundamentalist texts.

Sense of Unreality

Marin believes, however, that this collective expression is matched by an internal change that is much harder to identify:

> It is a kind of cultural involution occurring in many young people at the deepest levels of private experience. They have entered an internal evolutionary maelstrom in which they undergo radical changes and trials. They are surrounded by adults who seem unable to live passionately or effectively in the world, unable to understand or aid them. The adult hopes they hear voiced around them—"reformation of the system," "social engineering," "human potential"—must seem to the young both desperate and self-delusive, shrill tunes whistled in the dark.

No Man's Land of Psyche

In Mr. Marin's opinion, this situation exists because we have not yet been able to confront and accept ourselves for what we really are. But how could this be accomplished without a philosophy that fosters a sense of self that can survive rational examination? Of the youthful converts to evangelism, he says:

> They are both the victims and products of one of the century's many botched revolutions—the partial release of libido, of Lawrence's "dark gods," and our fumbled attempts to confront those gods. Under our surface *yes* to sensation, we have not yet learned how to stop saying *no* to life. Our new patterns of behavior allow us increased experience. We are driven toward sensation by a shrill mental need. But we also suffer in

> the flesh a contaminating guilt, a fear and detachment that empty whatever we do of significance. If there is among the young a slant toward ecstasy or carnal delight, it is riddled at the moment with more hysteria and fear than one finds in their parents. In this no man's land of the psyche, the young experience an inexplicable hurt. There is a sense of bewilderment, betrayal, and humiliation.

Little "Ripening"

The Christ that is accepted under such conditions is, he notes, not an example, a model for confronting and coming to terms with the mystery and ambiguities of the human situation. Instead it is the miraculous savior, acceptance of whom wipes out the past and makes understanding unnecessary. This leads in turn to a kind of amorphous passivity: "Nothing is generated from within. Instead, impulses flow in from the outside in a kind of perpetual 'imprinting' at odds with all ripening." Lack of the means to discover a vital and enduring sense of self then precipitates superficial and uneasy compromises:

> What one often sees, working or living with the young, is a peculiar condition of personality, an expansiveness and release at the surface, but beneath, a self held in suspension and closed defensively against the world like a fist or a fetus, struggling to maintain some sort of identity. Though there is, in general, an ache for transcendence, there is in many of the young little sense of, or love for, the reality to be transcended. There is an impatience with both ego and thought, but there is no fully developed ego to be set aside. Usually, what takes the place of thought is neither ecstasy nor imagination, but merely superstition. There is a sweet hollowness, an undercurrent of anger, a gentle impulse toward potency and touch, but not yet the hard daring and resilience it takes to survive in the world.

Lack of a "Center"

These phenomena are surely indications that this is indeed a transition age, as Mr. Marin hopefully suggests. But he points out that this fact puts a premium on survival and—

> Survival depends upon a resonance and depth of self, the existence at the center of experience of *someone,* a self strong enough to absorb the strains. But too often a center seems to be missing. Unable to deal adequately with the unceasing rush of experience, the young are forced to armor themselves against it with abstract systems and beliefs.

Spirituality Not Isolation

In the sense that awareness of self "at the center of experience"

is not wholly identified with, though involved in, its constant rotations, it too is an abstraction. But, unlike the systems and beliefs that Mr. Marin criticizes, it is founded on the wholeness of life, not on rejection of it. As he remarks, we have despoiled ourselves of the idea of spirituality as having a viable existence by separating it from our idea of life. Mr. Marin maintains that spirituality cannot be separated from life, isolated in safe, intellectual abstractions:

> What we forget in our zeal and belief is that meaning and value are incarnate. "Love, Mercy, Pity, Peace," as Blake said, "have a human form divine." They reside in each of us as the meaning released when we make real contact with the world. All we are, all self is, is life in touch with life. But when we fail to make that touch, we are prey to both a feeling of deadness and the dream of salvation.

Meaning Must Be Created

The author sees the possibility that we may complete our revolution by simply substituting one set of delusions for another, that we may change without progressing. On the other hand, he sees the present time as a unique opportunity to recreate meaning in the world. But, as he observes:

> Meaning is never assigned to the world, is never found. It is created by the depth of imagination and feeling we bring to the world.
>
> What matters after all, especially in times such as ours, is never how saved or whole one is, but the extent to which one restores to others, through presence and passion, a sense of possibility and independence.

What Mr. Marin says seems to imply that we must assume eventually a responsibility toward life as a whole, with no quarter given. But to achieve this—to be able to restore a "sense of possibility and independence" to others amid the subtleties of psychic experience he has so vividly described—surely requires at least a foothold in a reality beyond, if not separate from, these experiences. And how is such a foothold to be gained but through a rational understanding, gradually acquired, of the ways that universal principles apply to the inner man?